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Workshop: IT for the LIS professional

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Questions/Overview

- Does an LIS professional **need** knowledge of IT?
- If they do, what do they need to know?
- How would you teach/train LIS professionals the required IT knowledge?

Does an LIS professional **need** knowledge of IT?

- Answer used to be no!
- Change driven by early uptake of IT
- Now librarianship “follows” (as in Twitter)
- Now “everyone grows up with IT” (really?)
- The horror that is ECDL...
- Many clients need help...

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- The horror that is ECDL...
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- Answer: YES

What IT knowledge do LIS professionals need to have?

- **MUST HAVE:** “Ability to use basic IT”

“Ability to use basic IT”

- Files/directories/drives/devices
- Software and data files and file extensions
- File compression/Backups
- Basic security – keeping malware scanners and patches up to date
- Passwords and encryption
- Finding, installing and uninstalling software
- Use of standard software packages, especially databases

What IT knowledge do LIS professionals need to have?

- MUST HAVE: “Ability to use basic IT”
- MUST HAVE: “Understanding of the IT environment”

“Understanding of the IT Environment”

- Computing ‘generations’– faster, cheaper, smaller, more capable, more widely spread – Moore’s Law
- The IBM PC and compatibility – Microsoft Windows
- open source and Linux, open systems and standards
- The future: corporate ‘tussles’, virtualisation, the cloud (for storage and processing)

What IT knowledge do LIS professionals need to have?

- MUST HAVE: “Ability to use basic IT”
- MUST HAVE: “Understanding of the IT environment”
- OPTIONAL: “Library systems specialist”

“The Library systems specialist”

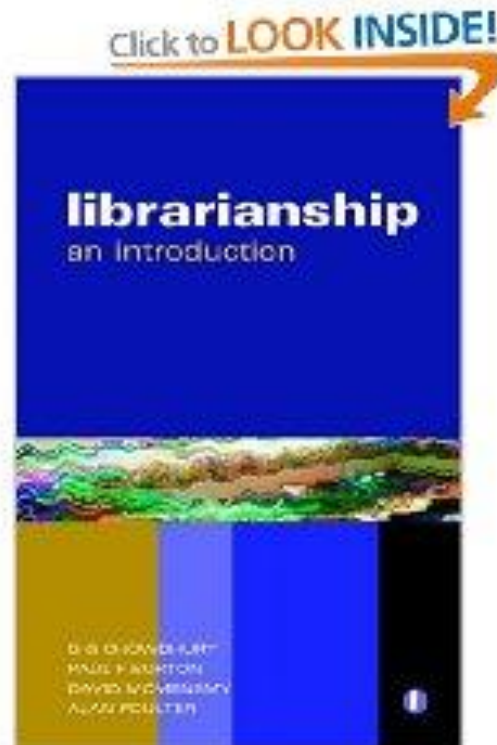
- Library management systems
 - loans, stock control, service management
 - OPAC, ‘discovery’ tools
- Digitisation/digital collection management tools e.g. CMS
- Web server-side knowledge, Internet networking, HTML/CSS/XML, metadata
- MARC/AACR2/RDA

How would you teach/train LIS professionals the required IT knowledge?

- Our MSc Information and Library Studies has seven taught “modules”:
 - Research Methods
 - Library and Information Sectors
 - Management of Library and Information Services
 - Information Retrieval and Access
 - Organisation of Knowledge
 - **Digital Libraries**

One text book to rule them all...

- Core must be both academic **and** practical
- Course Team wrote the course text book!



Digital Libraries module 1/6

- How to achieve **practical** elements?
- Not allowed to assess/develop basic IT skills! “Students already have them....”
- For Digital Libraries module these were:
 - database design
 - website construction and design (HTML/XML/CSS)
 - digitisation
 - Dublin Core/MARC
 - Experience of use of library management systems

Digital Libraries module 2/6

- Achieving practical aims:
 - **Databases** – use Zoho Creator store references from an earlier assignment
 - **Web/digitisation/Dublin Core** – students work in groups, use University Archives to source collections of photos for digitisation, creat collection websites incorporating DC metadata e.g. opening of the Royal College University building in

Digital Libraries module 3/6

- Use **Koha open source library management system** in labs
- Each student has access to own virtual copy of Koha, must set up branches, item types, borrower categories and charges
- Each student must add themselves as a borrower and reserve an item

Digital Libraries module 4/6

- Introduce open source through lecture content on:
 - open standards
 - development of operating systems
 - range of software available (e.g. ERP)
 - LAMP: Linux + Apache + MySQL + Perl

Digital Libraries module 5/6

- Detail library management systems through lecture on:
 - acquiring stock
 - cataloguing stock
 - loaning stock
 - dealing with serials etc
 - supporting user searches/reservations et
 - reporting on above for effective service management
- All the above are illustrated using Koha

Digital Libraries module 6/6

- Assessment of student use of Koha:
 - Students must enter 6 MARC records of books from 6 different authors with the same surname as the student (dropping letters if need be)
 - Limited to the following set of MARC fields:
 - 100, 245, 250, 260, 300, 440, 5XX, 700
- Will be upgraded to an exercise using RDA/ISBD to catalogue two assigned items

Conclusions

- Does an LIS professional **need** knowledge of IT?
- If they do, what do they need to know?
- How would you teach/train LIS professionals the required IT knowledge?

Any questions?